

News Release



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DRAFT KLAMATH BIOLOGICAL OPINION AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

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The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) today provided the Bureau of Reclamation with a draft Biological Opinion (BO) on the operation of Reclamation's Klamath Project in 2002. The Klamath Project is currently operating under short-term BO's from both the FWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that will expire on June 1, 2002.

The FWS BO will be available for public comment from Thursday, April 25, 2002 through Thursday, May 9, 2002. Copies of the BO may be obtained on Reclamation's website at: www.mp.usbr.gov or from Reclamation's Klamath Project Area office at 6600 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, OR 97603. Comments should be received by Dave Sabo, Klamath Project Area Manager, no later than 4 p.m. PDT on Thursday, May 9.

Reclamation will review the BO and the public comments it receives and then, after consultation with FWS will provide final comments to that agency. After reviewing Reclamation's comments, FWS will issue their final BO to Reclamation by June 1, 2002. This BO will provide operating guidance to the Klamath Project for 2002.

The bureau remains in consultation with NMFS and anticipates receiving their draft BO soon.

A contemporary water management agency, Reclamation is the largest wholesale water supplier in the United States, with operations and facilities in the 17 western states. Today, these facilities include 348 reservoirs with the capacity to store 245 million acre-feet of water. Reclamation projects supply one out of five western farmers with irrigation water for approximately 10 million farmland acres. Reclamation facilities also provide water to about 31 million people for municipal and industrial uses. In addition, Reclamation is the nation's second largest producer of hydroelectric power, generating more than 42 billion kilowatt hours of energy each year from 58 hydroelectric power plants. Its facilities also provide substantial flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits.

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